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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 6895th meeting of the Security Council, held on 19 December 2012, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Central African region", the President of the Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council strongly condemns the ongoing attacks and atrocities carried out by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and their continued violations of international humanitarian law and abuses of human rights, which pose a significant threat to the civilian population, in particular women and children, and have serious humanitarian and human rights consequences, including the displacement of 443,000 people across LRA-affected areas. The Council condemns further the recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, rape, sexual slavery and other sexual violence, and abductions. The Council demands an immediate end to all attacks by the LRA, particularly those on civilians, urges LRA leaders to release all those abducted, and insists that all LRA elements put an end to such practices, and disarm and demobilise.

"The Security Council reiterates its support for the United Nations Regional Strategy to Address the Threat and Impact of the Activities of the LRA and urges swift implementation of the five strategic areas of intervention identified in the strategy. The Council urges the United Nations Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), the United Nations political and peacekeeping missions in the region and other relevant United Nations presences to coordinate their efforts in support of the implementation of the strategy, as appropriate and within the limits of their mandates and capacities, and calls on the international community to provide assistance as possible to advance these strategic goals. The Council further urges UNOCA to continue to play a key role in the coordination of these activities. The Council requests that the Secretary-General present to the Council a prioritised and sequenced implementation plan to support the UN Regional Strategy no later than 28 February 2013, based on a clear division of labour between all parts of the international system as well as UN organisations. The Council further requests that this implementation plan identify key projects that support the priority activities of the strategy.

"The Security Council reiterates its support for the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against the LRA (AU RCI-LRA), and urges further progress toward its operationalisation and implementation. The

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Security Council urges all regional governments to fulfil their commitments under the AU-RCI, and encourages neighbouring states to cooperate with the AU-RCI. The Council further encourages all states in the region to take measures to ensure that the LRA is not able to operate with impunity in their territory. The Security Council also urges swift agreement on the Concept of Operations for the AU-RTF. The Council also calls on the AU, the LRA-affected States, and the international community to work together to secure the necessary resources for successful implementation. The Council underlines the need for all military action against the LRA to be conducted in compliance with applicable international law, including international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, and to minimize the risk of harm to civilians in those areas. The Council further encourages all governments in the region, working through this Initiative, to continue to strengthen their efforts and collaboration to end the LRA threat.

"The Council acknowledges and commends the important ongoing efforts being undertaken by MONUSCO in the fight against LRA including through training and capacity building of FARDC, support to the Joint information Operations Centre (JIOC), and implementation of the DDRRR programme to encourage and facilitate further LRA defections.

"The Security Council welcomes the strong collaboration between the United Nations and the AU in addressing the LRA threat, and encourages its continuation. The Council encourages the African Union (AU)'s Special Envoy, Francisco Madeira, and the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, Abou Moussa, to continue to work together with the governments of the region, including through convening a High-Level Meeting of the affected states to strengthen further their cooperation.

"The Security Council underlines the primary responsibility of States in the LRA-affected region to protect civilians. In this regard, the Council commends the efforts so far undertaken by the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Republic of South Sudan and Uganda to end the threat posed by the LRA, and urges further efforts from these countries, as well from other countries in the region. The Council notes the mandate of the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to help protect civilians in LRA-affected areas in their respective countries, and urges their continued efforts to implement this mandate, as well as the mandate of the African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BINUCA) to cooperate and share information related to the regional threat of the LRA. The Council stresses the need for enhanced cross-border coordination and information-sharing between these missions, as well as among all other actors in the region, to better anticipate LRA movements and imminent threats of attack. The Council welcomes efforts by local and international actors to establish enhanced information-sharing networks utilizing High Frequency radios and other communications technology to aid protection efforts in one of the world's most remote regions.

"The Security Council takes note of the growing concerns, cited in the Secretary-General's report, regarding the reported LRA presence in and around the area of Kafia Kingi, which is disputed by both Sudan and South Sudan, on the border with CAR.. The Council also expresses concern about the continued reports of LRA attacks in CAR, as far as west as Bangassou, as well as in the DRC. The Council calls on the UN missions in the region and AU-RTF to work together to monitor these reports and to develop a common operating picture of the LRA's disposition in the region. The Council also calls on the UN and AU to jointly investigate the LRA's logistical networks and possible sources of illicit financing, including alleged involvement in elephant poaching and related illicit smuggling.

"The Security Council welcomes the significant increase in individuals escaping or defecting from the LRA over recent months, and strongly supports ongoing efforts to promote defections through the distribution of leaflets, targeted radio broadcasts, and the establishment of safe reporting sites. The Council calls on the remaining LRA fighters to leave the group's ranks and participate in the Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Resettlement and Reintegration (DDRRR) process. The Council urges MONUSCO, BINUCA, UNMISS, and other United Nations actors in the LRA-affected region to continue to work with regional forces and non-governmental organizations to promote defections and support the DDRRR efforts across the LRA-affected area. The Council welcomes the High-Level Symposium on DDRRR of the LRA that took place on 30 November 2012 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and urges the missions in the region to quickly implement the specific standard operating procedures for the DDRRR of former LRA combatants. Given the resource constraints, the Council especially encourages SRSG Moussa and UNOCA to work with BINUCA to develop a plan to augment its support for DDRRR efforts in CAR. The Council calls on international partners to provide further strategic support as needed.

"The Security Council commends efforts by international donors to provide humanitarian assistance to LRA-affected populations in CAR, DRC and the Republic of South Sudan. The Council welcomes the steps taken to deliver an enhanced, comprehensive, and more regional approach to the humanitarian situation, including assistance to victims of sexual violence and other attacks and urges further progress in this regard. The Council reaffirms the requirement for all parties to promote and ensure safe and unhindered access for humanitarian organizations to the civilian population, in accordance with international law, including applicable international humanitarian law, and guiding principles of humanitarian assistance. The Council expresses concern about the lack of regular humanitarian access to many LRA-affected communities in CAR and the DRC, principally because of poor infrastructure, and encourages increased UN efforts and international donor support for humanitarian access.

"The Security Council recalls that the International Criminal Court's arrest warrants for Joseph Kony, Okot Odhiambo, and Dominic Ongwen on charges of, inter alia, war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape and the enlistment of children through abduction have yet to be enforced, and calls upon all States to cooperate with the Ugandan authorities

and the International Criminal Court in order to implement those warrants, and to bring to justice those responsible for the atrocities.

"The Security Council requests that the Secretary-General keep it informed on the activities of UNOCA, the progress of implementation of the Regional Strategy and the efforts being undertaken respectively by missions in the region and other relevant United Nations agencies to that end, including through a single report on UNOCA and the LRA to be submitted before 15 May 2013."